STATEMENT

In the meeting taken with members of Parliament from Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha from West Bengal on 8th August 1991 at New Delhi, the Members had laid emphasis on Teesta Barrage Project to be declared as National Project and fully runded by the Centre in the VIIU Plan for its early completion the other allied issues as brought forward were approval to Upper Venkateshwar Project, early clearance of Vidyadhar Flood Control Scheme early clearance of Subarnarekha Project, Kangsabati Modernisation Project, left bank canal of Teesta Barrage through forest area, expeditious completion of on-going projects, dredging of Ganga in its lower reaches, antierosion works to be taken up as National Project to be funded by the centre. A suggestion was made that Centre should send an Expert team for assessment of on-going devastation due to erosion in Sagar and Ghoramare islands of Sunderban area of 24 paraganas (South) and further, this to be taken up as a National project for saving these islands from further erosion. It was also suggested to constitute a National Apex Body on Water management policy for surface and sub-surface utilisation of resources like national Flood Commissiion.

While Teesta Barrage Project has been recommended to the Planning Commission for consideration as National Project and its funding by the Centre, the concept and criteria for national projects have to be concurred by the Planning Commission. For expenditious completion of the irrigation projects, State Gvoernment has also to make sizeable increase in the irrigation sector. The Central Water Commission has taken up special drive to get the observations/ clarifications fulfilled through meetings with State officials for completing project appraisal formalities. For obtaining clearance/approval of irrigation projects, the State Government is required to comply with the observations of Central Water Commission, Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and the concerned Ministries at the Centre.

The Central team visited Ghoramare islands from 29th to 30th October, 1991, in pursuance of the suggestion made.

Nationalised Banks at Bangalore

1296. SHRI G. MADE GOWDA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to issue passport applications through post offices and nationalised banks at Bangalore; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the time by which such facility is likely to be introduced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) and (b). The possibility of sale of passport application forms through Post Offices and Banks is being explored.

Flood Control Projects In Kerala

1297. SHRI T.J. ANJALOSE: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the details Including the estimated cost of the flood control projects in Kerala pending with the Union Government;

(b) the time by which those are likely to be cleared; and

(c) the details of Central assistance provided to Kerala for control of floods in the State during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA): (a) There is no flood control project of Government of Kerala pending techno-economic appriasal with Central Water Commission.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) While no Centria assistance was provided for control of floods in kerala during

the last three years, the Centre has been extending Central Loan Assistance for anti-sea erosion works to State Government from 1972-73. The Central Loan Assistance given during the last three years for anti sea erosion works is as under:-

Year	*Rs. in crore*
1988-89	2.50
1989-90	2.37
1990-91	2.05

Safety Measures for Coal Mining

1298. SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have formulated any scheme to provide adequate safety in the coal mines;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any modern technology is proposed to be adopted to improve safety and environment aspects of coal mining; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the time by which the said scheme is expected to be implemented?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI S.B. NYAMAGOUDA): (a) and (b). The mining operations in coal mines including the safety aspects are regulated by the Mines Act, 1952 and the rules and regulations framed thereunder. There is a regular system of monitoring and reviewing the safety situation, through Pit Safety Committees (including workers' representatives) atg unit level, tripartite committees at the Area and Company levels, Safety Board at Coal India and the Standing Committee on Safety in coal mines at Govt. level. Periodical Safety Conference also lay down guidelines for improving safety in mines. Workmen Inspectors are appointed in all mines, who report to the management and to the Director General of Mines Safety.

(c) and (d). Environment Management Plans now form an integral part of coal projects to ensure adequate environment protection after obtaining expert advice on modern technology. In the matter of safety, the new technology of roof-bolting is being adopted increasingly to prevent accidents through fall of roof-side and fresh survey plans are being got prepared in collaboration with the Survey of India to safeguard against inundation of mines.

Fresh Water Aquaculture

1299. SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have launched fresh water aquaculture scheme in some States as part of anti-poverty drive;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have made any assessment on the success of that anti-poverty drive; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) and (b). Government have launched Fresh Water Aquaculture Scheme for increasing fish production, generating employment and income and diversifying agriculture.

(c) and (d). Under the scheme of Fresh Water Aquaculture, 365 Fish Farmers Development Agencies (FFDAs) have so far been sanctioned covering potential districts in all the States. The FFDAs have brought about 2.82 lakh hectares ponds and tanks under fish culture and trained about 3.31 lakh fish farmer in improved practices of fish farming. The average productivity of ponds and tanks under FFDA programme has gone up from 50kg/ha./year in 1973-74 to 1005 kg/ha./year in 1990-91.